

EDINA PARK BOARD
7:30 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS
DECEMBER 12, 2000

MEMBERS PRESENT: Tom White, Andrew Herring, Dave Fredlund, Karla Sitek, George Klus, Floyd Grabiell, Andy Finsness, John Murrin

MEMBERS ABSENT: Linda Presthus, Chuck Mooty, Scot Housh

STAFF PRESENT: John Keprios, Ed MacHolda, Janet Canton, Donna Tilsner, Susie Miller, John Valliere

I. APPROVAL OF THE TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 2000 PARK BOARD MINUTES

Mr. Klus indicated that a correction needs to be made to the November 14, 2000 Park Board Minutes. On page eight it should read "raising the greens fee for patrons".

George Klus MOVED TO APPROVE THE NOVEMBER 14, 2000 PARK BOARD MINUTES WITH THE CORRECTION BEING MADE. Karla Sitek SECONDED THE MOTION. MINUTES APPROVED WITH CORRECTION BEING MADE.

II. PLAYGROUND PROGRAM AND NEW RECREATION PROGRAM PRESENTATION - SUSIE MILLER AND DONNA TILSNER

Mr. Keprios introduced Susie Miller, Adaptive Recreation Supervisor and Donna Tilsner, Recreation Supervisor. He noted that they have come up with some really creative ideas for new programs, which they will discuss, as well as talk a little bit about the current playground program.

Ms. Tilsner indicated that the Park and Recreation Department has offered a summer playground program for many years. She noted that last summer they had over 600 participants and 22 leaders spread out over 13 parks. She explained that the program is six weeks long and consists of playing games, making crafts, having special events, singing and reading. Ms. Tilsner pointed out that they also offered three separate field trips that the kids could sign up for. She stated that last year they did hire a games specialist and an arts and crafts specialist who went out to the parks and helped give the playground leaders some new zest to their playground program. She indicated that she felt this was very successful and did enhance the program.

Ms. Tilsner explained that they have some new plans for the coming year. They hope to have the Humane Society visit the playgrounds. They are also going to have Kathy Iverson, Edina Chemical Health Specialist, make some presentations at the playgrounds as well as there will be visits by the Edina Police and Fire Departments. She stated that this year they are also hoping to set up a library program. Ms. Tilsner indicated that also new for this year they are going to be using Countryside Park as a site for the older kids, ages 9 to 12. This way with all of the older kids at one site maybe more kids in this age group will sign up for the program.

Ms. Tilsner explained that every year it's getting harder and harder to find people to work and they continually need to be creative to try to find ways to attract workers. Therefore, this year they are going to start a new program called "Lead" (Leadership Encouragement and Development). This program will teach the youth some leadership skills, self-esteem, working as a team and some other skills that might be useful as they are entering into the part-time work force. She stated that their hope is these youth will want to volunteer the rest of summer and when they become 16 year-olds they will want to work for the park and recreation department.

Ms. Miller indicated that this year they are going to offer their first field trip for families and it will be a trip to the Minnesota Vikings Training Camp in Mankato. She noted that they are hoping it will somehow be supported by sponsorship and will therefore be fairly inexpensive.

Ms. Tilsner explained that last year they held their first fishing clinic at Lake Cornelia and they will be having it again this year. She indicated that they worked with the Minniqua program, who provided the instructor. The clinic runs for approximately three hours and the participants learn where fish live and eat and as well as how to bait a hook. At the end of the clinic the kids go home with a starter tackle box and some handouts. The fee for this clinic is \$5.00 and each session can accommodate 30 kids to which both sessions filled last year. They are hoping to add another session this year depending on whether or not Minniqua is available for another session.

Ms. Tilsner noted that last year a gentleman started "Chess in the Parks" which averaged 20 participants every Tuesday and Thursday afternoon at Rosland Park. Participants did need to pre-register, however, there was no fee involved. There were usually two to three adults chaperoning and everyone had a great time. This year they are planning on having the program again but they have yet to determine which park they will use.

Ms. Miller explained that they are going to start a 3 on 3 basketball league of champs for 6th, 7th, and 8th graders at Countryside Park. There will be no officials, just a staff member to monitor the game and keep score.

Ms. Miller indicated that they are looking at starting a sports spectacular that would be held two times a week for four weeks for 9 to 12 year olds. This is an age group where they really need to find something for the kids to do. The program will teach skills for all

different sports as well as start up some of the old time favorites, such as marbles, bocci ball and croquet.

Ms. Tilsner commented that last year they had a nature camp which they plan on having again this year. She noted that it is a four day program held at Rosland Park where they learn about a lot of different things that are at the park such as birds, insects, etc. She stated that they will also do some crafts and on the last day of camp they will go swimming at the aquatic center. She indicated that last year's nature camp was a great success.

Ms. Miller pointed out that last year was the first time they had the Fab 4 and 5 program. It is held two days a week for 20 kids. Because the program filled up so quickly they added two more sessions. This is a great opportunity for 4 and 5 year olds to make a connection with their parks and park leaders and it also helps make the transition to the playground program a lot easier.

Mr. Herring indicated that as he understands it the playground program is supervised, however, it is not a daycare. Therefore, he noted that he does have some concerns about 4 and 5 year olds and asked if a license is needed for this age group. Ms. Miller replied that no license is required and that yes, it does become more child care than what the playground program is and that there is one staff member for every five kids. She commented that the program is 1 ½ hours long and that no activities last for more than 10 or 15 minutes because of their attention span. Mr. Herring asked how drop off and pick up are handled to which Ms. Miller replied that the staff check in the children when they are dropped off and checked out when the kids are picked up. The parents are also supposed to let the leaders know if someone else is picking up their child/ren. Mr. Keprios indicated that he thinks we are covered but he will double check to make sure.

Mr. Keprios pointed out that we are trying to offer more recreation-based programs as opposed to just athletics. He noted that in keeping with the asset building initiative they are trying to connect kids with adults and offer more family oriented and recreation oriented programming. He indicated that he is very proud of his staff, they are very creative and have done a great job.

III. BRAEMAR GOLF COURSE CLUBHOUSE IMPROVEMENTS - JOHN VALLIERE

Mr. Valliere explained that in 1992 the Park Board and City Council approved a master plan for the Braemar Golf Course Clubhouse. Therefore, they have slowly been working on what they can afford to do each year and that included the expansion of the pro shop and the addition of the decks which accommodates the golf cars underneath it. However, they are now at a point where they can afford to make some changes because of the good year they've had. He noted that they cannot afford to do it all at this time but there are three things that they would like to see accomplished at this time. He stated that first they need to have an elevator put in that meets the ADA requirements. They have been told

that the cost for the elevator is approximately \$200,000 compared to the \$85,000 they were previously told a few years ago.

Mr. Valliere explained what they would like to see done on the lower level and noted this portion of the plan would cost approximately \$342,000. He then explained what he would like to see done on the upper level which would cost approximately \$166,000. He commented that the project has not yet been bid and that these are the architect's estimates and noted that they do include a percentage for overrun.

Mr. White asked Mr. Valliere if there will still be a long hallway between the pro shop and the club room to which he indicated yes, however, it is something that he will look into possibly changing. Mr. Valliere stated that at this time he is seeking approval from the Park Board to move ahead on this project. He again noted because this was their best year ever it unexpectedly put some money in their pockets that will help them accomplish this. Mr. Herring asked how much for the two options to which Mr. Valliere replied approximately \$508,000.

Mr. Fredlund asked if the golf course is being required to install an elevator to which Mr. Valliere replied at this time they are not required to but that in the near future they will. Mr. Keprios noted that it is his understanding that when you make significant improvements such as this it is a requirement.

Mr. Murrin indicated that he thinks \$200,000 for an elevator is very expensive and noted that a client of his put in two elevators at a senior center and it only cost \$90,000 for two elevators. Mr. White noted that he knows someone who put in an elevator at a building he owned and it cost \$120,000. Mr. Valliere commented that it would definitely help if he could bring that number down.

Mr. Herring asked if \$500,000 is put into the golf course are there any other crying needs in the city right now. Mr. Keprios replied that the golf course has a long-range capital plan that is going to be afforded assuming the golf course continues to do as well financially as it has. This is the highest on their priority list of what needs to be done. Mr. Klus asked wasn't this master plan originally approved back in 1992 to which Mr. Keprios replied yes and noted that Gordon Hughes, City Manager, wanted the Park Board to revisit it to be sure they had their current blessing. Mr. Herring asked about the current debt to which Mr. Keprios replied that the golf course is doing so well financially that they not only paid for their operating expenses and current debt but that their cash flow is about \$770,000 to the positive to date. He noted that the golfers are essentially paying for all of these improvements and not tax dollars.

Mr. Klus suggested that one option would be to approve Mr. Valliere's recommendation up to \$515,000.

Mr. Herring indicated that he thinks Mr. Valliere is just looking for a general approval. Mr. Klus commented that he has a problem with general approvals but it always seems to

cost a lot more than anticipated and we need to be somewhat fiscally responsible even though the City Council can over rule us.

Tom White MOVED TO APPROVE GOING FORWARD WITH THE PLAN AND BIDDING OUT OPTION 1 AND OPTION 2 AND THEN COME BACK TO THE PARK BOARD WITH THE NUMBERS SO WE CAN HAVE ONE FINAL LOOK AT IT BEFORE WE MOVE FORWARD. Dave Fredlund SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

IV. SKATE PARK PROPOSAL - YORKTOWN PARK

Mr. Keprios gave a presentation on the proposed area for the skate park. He noted that it is being called the “Tri-City Skate Park” because of the three communities involved. He also noted that Mr. Herring should be credited for this because it was his idea. He stated that all three cities are contributing \$80,000 and that the YMCA will be putting in some dollars for parking and possibly for some capital shortfall. Mr. Keprios explained that they are currently waiting to hear the outcome of the ¼ million dollar grant they applied for to help make this happen. Mr. Keprios noted that the beauty of the plan is that the YMCA would run it, operate it, assume all operating losses and liability as well as cover all insurance. This is a win, win for everyone involved. Mr. Keprios pointed out that if for some reason it is no longer popular and we abandon it and decide not to make it a skate park anymore, it’s on our property and we will decide what to do with it at that time. Mr. Keprios showed where the free standing building would be located. He commented that it will displace an adult practice softball field that hasn’t been very desirable for quite some time and would require a lot of money to bring it up to a more useable condition.

Mr. Keprios indicated that he is asking for the Park Board’s approval of this in concept and then see what happens with the ¼ million dollar grant proposal. Mr. Herring asked if the YMCA wants this next to their building to which Mr. Keprios replied yes, however, the proposed site offers a greater opportunity for future outdoor skate park expansion. Mr. Keprios stated that there are pros and cons to this. One of the pros is that there is no requirement to have a YMCA membership to the use the facility, it’s just a flat fee that the Park Board would be approving.

Mr. White asked if the condominium owners have been notified that this building may be going up to which Mr. Keprios replied they have not yet notified them. However, he will certainly do that before we get too far into the process. He stated that thankfully the existing privately owned tennis courts serve as a pretty good buffer.

Mr. Finsness asked Mr. Keprios what he thinks the chances are for receiving the ¼ million dollar grant. Mr. Keprios noted that he thinks the chances are pretty good, especially since it’s a collaborative effort with two other cities, which is looked upon as very favorable. He stated that they hope to know by the end of the month. Mr. Klus

asked about fundraising to which Mr. Keprios replied that they don't have an organized campaign yet because they want to see what the dollars and requirements are.

Mr. Grabiell asked what the Park Board has already approved on this. Mr. White replied that the Park Board authorized Mr. Keprios to go forward and talk with the Southdale YMCA as well as other cities and organizations to see if everyone could reach some sort of a joint agreement as to how we could proceed.

Mr. Murrin asked if the YMCA would keep the profits to which Mr. Keprios replied there will not be any profits. However, the YMCA is willing to assume and absorb any operating losses.

Floyd Grabiell MOVED TO APPROVE THE SKATE PARK PROPOSAL IN CONCEPT. John Murrin SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

V. BLUE RIBBON COMMITTEE UPDATE

Mr. Keprios indicated that he and Mr. MacHolda just attended their 12th Blue Ribbon Committee meeting last night and they are making great progress. He noted that currently there is 8.4 million dollars worth of city/park property improvements. Mr. Keprios then handed out two lists to which one was sorted by park and the other was sorted by project.

Mr. Keprios explained that the Committee made great progress last night on the proposed projects planned on being built on School District property. He noted that they have sent the architect back on a charge to fill in some holes because we are still waiting for some answers on some of the scenarios. He stated that they are still at a loss as to where to put the bubble and the exact alignment of the gymnasiums. Mr. Keprios then handed out a list on the School District property projects that are currently under consideration. There is 21 million dollars listed at the east campus and \$20,300,000 at the west campus for a total of 41 million dollars. Mr. Keprios noted that a lot of this can change because if you look at the west campus they are considering a 25 meter pool versus a 50 meter pool which would definitely mean a difference in cost. Mr. Keprios indicated that the one area they don't have any figures on yet is the renovation of the soccer field on the lower level on the inside of the track at the west campus, the architects are still working on those numbers.

Mr. Keprios indicated that in looking at the different scenarios they need to determine whether the soccer field at the west campus is within a flood plain, which therefore would not work. He stated that they are also looking at possibly the Braemar soccer field site and are waiting to hear on the feasibility as well as whether or not fire trucks can get back there.

Mr. Keprios explained that if we were to build four gyms, there would be two at Valley View, one at Concord and one at South View. With a 25 meter pool, the projects on

School District property would come to \$29,377,653.00 and then add to that the Park Department's 8.4 million, we are looking at a 37 million dollar referendum. He noted that these are just some of the scenarios that they are looking at.

Mr. Murrin asked how well the performing arts is going over to which Mr. Keprios replied he thinks it's going very well, however, the Normandale Elementary people have spoken very negatively about it. Mr. Klus commented that the people from Normandale have been against everything. Mr. Murrin asked if Normandale School is pretty positive about doing some of the performing arts on the west side campus to which Mr. Keprios replied that they might be, however, they have not discussed it.

Ms. Sitek indicated that she thinks Concord is the perfect place for the gyms and noted that she gets annoyed that we listen so much to the people from Normandale. Mr. Keprios stated that Dr. Dragseth is currently trying to figure out a way to get through this and address the concerns of parents who have children in the Normandale Elementary French Emersion School. He noted that there seems to be a lot of support for the performing arts and all of the field improvements and gyms. He stated that he also thinks we are getting closer to having an answer for the pool. Mr. Murrin asked if they are leaning towards a 25 meter pool or a 50 meter pool to which Mr. Keprios responded that he thinks when all is said and done it will probably be a 25 meter pool. Mr. White asked if the operating costs are a lot higher for a 50 meter pool to which Mr. Keprios responded that the architect has indicated it would only cost an additional \$35,000, however, that estimate is speculative at this point in time. He noted that Mr. MacHolda and he were both surprised by that number and feel it might be considerably higher than that. Mr. MacHolda stated that he was very surprised by what he heard last night because when he compares the report from last night to the report they did in 1997 there is a \$400,000 difference in terms of building and a \$20,000 to \$30,000 in terms of operation. Mr. Keprios commented that the University of Minnesota will also tell you that the numbers in the report are not realistic. He noted that he thinks TSP was put on a real fast track to come up with some answers and therefore, didn't have enough time to thoroughly research the operating expenses. He noted that they have been asked to revisit the numbers on the 50 meter pool and to also see if it would actually fit on that site. Mr. Murrin asked Mr. Klus if he thinks we really need a 50 meter pool in the community to which he replied yes, he thinks we do if we are going to stay in competitive swimming. Mr. MacHolda pointed out that at the College Division 2 and 3 levels, 50 meter pools are unheard of and at Division 1 you see very few. He commented that 50 meter pools are even becoming obsolete in the outdoor setting. More and more people are demolishing 50 meter pools and putting in family aquatic centers. Mr. MacHolda stated that if all of the high schools across the country were surveyed you would probably find that Edina is the only high school with a 50 meter pool. Mr. Keprios commented that swim clubs are the ones who need 50 meter pools, and that high school kids do not need 50 meter pools. Mr. Keprios indicated that he thinks an argument could be made that maybe a 50 meter pool should be built somewhere as a regional pool and get the state involved.

Mr. White asked if they would be able to generate money with a 50 meter pool that they wouldn't be able to do with a 25 meter pool. Mr. MacHolda replied that he's convinced that a 50 meter pool would be busy, however, the competitive swimmer is not used to paying what it costs to operate the facility and it would need to be subsidized. Mr. Keprios added that of all of the 50 meter pools he could find in the United States, not one of them could break even. Mr. Klus asked if a 25 meter pool would be financially viable to which Mr. MacHolda replied their facilities are very old and outdated and do not provide enough lanes to have a true high school meet. Therefore, he feels that the plan that is currently in place would work very well. Mr. Klus again asked if this is a viable option or will they lose money on it. Mr. MacHolda responded that the only way pools have become profitable is through the family aquatic centers. Mr. Murrin asked Mr. MacHolda if he thinks there is going to be a loss no matter what size the pool is to which Mr. MacHolda responded it will not be a revenue producer but than again neither are basketball courts. Mr. Klus asked if the school will be responsible for the pool even though the bond issue is offered by the City of Edina to which it was noted that is going to be part of the discussion. From the start, the city's position has been that the City of Edina is willing to put up all of the dollars to build new facilities and improve existing ones on school property only if the school agrees to operate them on a 30 year agreement and offer the community guaranteed access.

Mr. Herring indicated that it sounds like the referendum will be in the high 30's to low 40 million dollars. Mr. Keprios stated that the committee does not know what the final dollar will be yet because there is still some editing that needs to be done.

Mr. Herring asked what is the merchandising plan on all of this to which Mr. Keprios replied they haven't gotten that far yet. Currently their job is to make a recommendation to what and where facilities need to be placed and that there is a validated need. Their report will be in both written and power point form and will be presented to the City Council in January. Mr. Herring commented that he thinks one of the key things here is to make sure that we go out and sell this to the community.

Mr. Klus asked for some insight on the proposed park projects and asked why some of the playground equipment that was on the last referendum is listed again. Mr. Keprios explained that it is for ADA compliant access surfaces to playground equipment, which was intentionally omitted from the 1996 referendum.

Mr. Herring asked if everything for the Aquatic Center has been included to which Mr. Keprios replied yes. Mr. Keprios explained that the reason they are asking for 1.5 million for that aquatic center is that we need a revenue source to fund our long-term capital improvement plan. The plan is to use the aquatic center revenues to pay back that 1.5 million dollar loan on the non-interest bearing note that will become a large share of the capital plan's funding source beginning in the year 2003.

Mr. Keprios commented that Mr. MacHolda has done so well this year that he could make some pretty significant improvements without having to borrow any money. The

Aquatic Center has a very strong, positive cash flow and our thinking is that we are going to need a source of revenue to fund our long-term capital improvement plan. Mr. Keprios stated that they thought it made some sense to give the aquatic center 1.5 million dollars up front to do all of their improvements right now. The Aquatic Center will then pay the 1.5 million back in time on a non-interest bearing note which will cost the aquatic center less in the long-run while funding the general parks' capital improvement plan. Mr. Murrin asked what would be done to which Mr. MacHolda gave a presentation last month on what he would like to see accomplished at the pool. He noted that the big ticket is replacing the water slide. He indicated that he would also like to introduce a new feature, an inner tube ride. Mr. MacHolda indicated that he hopes to have a structural engineer come out in the spring and assess it and see what we need to do just to make sure it's operational for this year and make sure it's safe. He stated that he doesn't want to spend any more money than he needs to because he plans to go forward with the water slide in 2001 whether or not the referendum passes. He explained that he will take the dollars generated from 2000-2001 and some short term finance dollars to get it done. Mr. Herring suggested to Mr. MacHolda that he look into adding a third slide because no matter how many slides there are there will still be huge lines. Therefore, for the marginal additional cost to add a third slide would be good. Mr. MacHolda responded that he will look into it. He then commented that he is real pleased with how the master plan has turned out and whether there's a referendum or not he would like to show the general public that they can expect this in 2002 or 2003.

Mr. Fredlund asked about the playground equipment at Van Valkenburg Park to which Mr. Keprios responded that the plan is to finish off the little neighborhood park section of the park near the water tower, which has been requested by the neighborhood for some time.

Mr. Murrin asked if this will solve a lot of the problems that we were worried about because of the last referendum to which Mr. Keprios replied he hopes so and also commented that he believes that the community is going to be thrilled.

VI. ADJOURNMENT

John Murrin MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 9:00 P.M. Karla Sitek SECONDED THE MOTION. MEETING ADJOURNED.